

NOW WHAT? April 15, 2018 *Getting through hopelessness, loss, & heartache*

John 16:33 I've told you all this so that you may have peace in Me. **Here on earth you'll have many trials & sorrows.** But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

I believe your greatest testimonies will come from your greatest trials.

2 Corinth 4:16 MSG We're not giving up. How could we! Even though on the outside it often looks like things are falling apart on us, on the inside, where God is making new life, not a day goes by w/out His unfolding grace. These hard times are small potatoes compared to the coming good times, the lavish celebration prepared for us. There's far more here than meets the eye. The things we see now are here today, gone tomorrow. But the things we can't see now will last forever.

James 1:2-8 ...**when troubles of any kind come your way**, consider it an opportunity for great joy.³ For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.

****First step to getting through hopelessness, loss, & heartache is to know, speak, live, run to the Word of God.**

Romans 5:2 Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, & we confidently & joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory.³ *We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems & trials; we know that they help us develop endurance.* ⁴ Endurance develops strength of character; character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. & this hope won't lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because He's given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts w/ His love.

****Another step to getting through hopelessness, loss, & heartache is to have the right identity.**

***Who or what defines your identity? Your sense who you are; how you see yourself & see your life; your self-image; your self-worth.*

***It may not have anything to do w/ truth or reality. But it's what we see, feel, think, what we've been told & what we believe.*

2 Corinthians 5:17 ...anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

*"We must find our **identity in Jesus** to get through hopelessness!"
Parents, family, religion, school, media, & environment, all teach us how to think about ourselves.*

****Many people build their identity w/ their problems****

*For many people-the negatives of life become their whole identity:
My temper; **my** diabetes; **my** debts; **my** divorce; **my** addiction; **My** family has always been poor; **I** have a history of addiction/disease/anger, etc. in my family – It's their identity.*

When your problems, past failures, & weaknesses become part of your identity, you'll never be free from them.

*They become habits that you learn to live with & never overcome. *Your subconscious "believes" you & you **need** those things to be who you are.*

*Some of us don't really want to overcome & be free from our troubles:
We'd lose our identity; we'd have to take responsibility - no more being a victim or excuses; we'd have to serve others; we couldn't blame others*

The world/society is always having an identity crisis: They're trying to find themselves, define & discover themselves; sexual identity crisis, personality crisis, emotional crisis – the world lacks a secure identity.

BUT!! When you became a Christian, your old identity died, and you became a new person in Christ!

Galatians 2:20 My old self has been crucified w/ Christ. **It's no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.** I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me & gave Himself for me.

Hope-filled Christians see themselves as “new people in Christ” & learn to be free from the past & their problems

“I knew a young man who had been abused & rejected from his father & came from a divorced home. But he died in November of 1975. That was me!”

*“I remember things from another life, but I am not that man today!”
Now, I identify w/ Christ. This is the new life that I now live!!*

Romans 6:4b ...just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live **new lives**. Since we've been united w/ Him in His death, we'll also be raised to life as He was. 6 We know that our old sinful selves were crucified w/ Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We're no longer slaves to sin. When we died w/ Christ we were set free from the power of sin....**11** So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin & alive to God through Jesus. 12 Don't let sin control the way you live; don't give in to sinful desires. 13 Don't let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Give yourselves completely to God, you were dead, but **now you have new life**. Use your whole body as an instrument to do what's right for the glory of God. 14 Sin is no longer

your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God's grace.

*Sin, struggling, suffering, & failing has no more dominion over you!
**If you identify w/ sin, struggling, suffering, & failure, you'll
subconsciously move toward it.*

**Let's learn to say: "That's not me. That's not like me. That's not who I
am in Christ!"*

Your new identity **moves you forward**, toward all that Jesus is.
1 John 4:17 As we live in God our love grows more perfect. We won't
be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face Him w/ confidence
because we live like Jesus here in this world (as He is, so are we...)

God makes us **new** as He is making ALL THINGS **new**!!
*His mercies are **new** every morning! Sing a **new** song; He's doing a **new**
thing; He's given us a **new** name; a **new** spirit; a **new** heart; a **new** man!
So be "aware of"/"awake to" how God sees you & how you see yourself.*

Ephesians 5:14 AMP Awake, O sleeper, arise from the dead, & Christ
shall shine (make day dawn) upon you & give you light. 15 Look
carefully then how you walk! Live purposefully & worthily & accurately,
not as the unwise & witless, but as wise, sensible, intelligent people, 16
Making the very most of the time, buying up each opportunity...

In Christ you are: Dead & buried; resurrected; a new species; righteous;
redeemed from the curse; blessed; chosen & complete

"Never let your old self-image keep you from what God has promised."

"LIFE IN ACTION"

Recite this confession every day this week.

Affirmation/Confession: *I'm a new person in Christ. My old life is dead & gone; I'm raised up w/ Christ to live a new life. I have what God says I have. I can do what God says I can do. I am blessed in my spirit, soul, body, finances, & family. Because of Jesus, I'm getting through hopelessness, loss, & heartache. I am living my dream. I will fulfill God's will for my life on earth, as it is in heaven. In Jesus' name, amen!*